INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

TO A COURSE ON THE

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF SURGERY.

DELIVERED IN THE

VERMONT ACADEMY OF MEDICINE.

MARCH 12th, 1840.

BY JAMES BRYAN, M.D.

Professor of Surgery in the above Institution---Member of the Philadelphia Medical Society---of the Academy of Nat. Sciences, &c. &c.

[Published at the request of the Class.]

1840.

Castleton, March 1840.

PROF. BRYAN:

We, as representatives of the class of the Vermont Academy of Medicine, do respectfully solicit for publication a copy of your Introductory Lecture, delivered March 12th, 1840.

J. SANFORD,
T. HAMLIN,
J. N. NORTHROP, } *Committee.*

To J. Sanford, T. Hamlin, and J. N. Northrop:

GENTLEMEN:

My Introductory Lecture, delivered March 12th, 1840, bears the characteristics common to such productions; as such, I place it at your disposal.

Allow me through you to tender to the class, my sense of the honor thus conferred upon me, and also to express my pleasure at witnessing the *daily assiduity* and correct moral deportment which (as individuals and as a class) so eminently distinguishes them.

I Remain
Yours Truly.
JAMES BRYAN.

Rutland—H. T. White, & Co. Printers.

LECTURE.

GENTLEMEN:

During the last year I was honored by the Trustees of this Institution with the tender of the chair of the Principles and Practice of Surgery. The responsibility of the station, thus held out, with other important considerations, made it doubtful for some months, whether or not I would be justified in the acceptance of so distinguished a trust. Having however conferred with some of my friends, and feeling, I trust, a pardonable enthusiasm in my profession, with a strong desire to see its principles disseminated to an extent commensurate with their importance, I at length consented to leave my now distant home and its pleasant associations, for a time, to assist you in a pursuit at once elevated, honorable and worthy the exercise of the highest talents. That our end may be obtained, and that the school, the Trustees and the neighborhood, may be benefitted by our meeting together, is the earnest and ardent wish of my heart.

Our profession has ever stood high in the estimation of mankind, and dates its origin in the remotest antiquity.

Man, like the beasts that perish, is born in weakness and helplessness, and in the first periods of his existence, is, perhaps one of the *most* helpless and irrational of animals.

Devoid of that instinct which guides other creatures with unerring certainty, to seek those objects which are useful, and shun those which are hurtful, and as yet endowed with but faint glimmerings of that divine reason which is soon to expand and lead him to heights, but little below the angels, he gropes his way in an uncertain twilight, worse perhaps than total darkness, since it serves only to make darkness visible, and causes him to stumble and totter, at a time when other animals are upright and enjoying all the privileges of their existence.

In addition to this, as soon as his eyes are opened upon the scene around him, he finds innumerable ills and sorrows besetting him on every hand, with but few natural means of defence or redress. Reason now assumes the sceptre, and in proportion to the wants and sufferings of her votary, does she sway her potent skill over the elements of nature. The elements bow to her power; air, earth, fire and water are but implements in her hand, by which she not only guards and protects, but enobles and refines the favored creature of her charge.

But, as in the history of one mind, we find that it does not at once attain its highest degree of perfection, so in the history of nations, or of our race in general, we observe that there has been a gradual growth of knowledge and science up to the present time; and no people or nation can boast of having attained the highest point of improvement of which the human mind is capable. A view

of the history and progressive growth of the mind may best be obtained, perhaps, by reference to the history and gradual extension of any one or more of the sciences. These, commencing in the early ages of the world have, from time to time by the aids of reason and observation, slowly but surely advanced to an extent which would baffle any *one* mind, even the most powerful, in the present day, to comprehend and understand.

The short tenure of the life of man has had little or no effect in impeding the growth of knowledge—this, like the mind itself, may be said to be eternal in duration, and unlimited in expansion,—and with the power that we have of transmitting it unimpaired from generation to generation, may be said to have grown as rapidly and extended as widely, as if the first cultivators had continued to live and improve it up to the present day.

There is nothing, perhaps, more appropriate, or better calculated to rouse the young aspirant after knowledge to industry and perseverance in its pursuit, than a view of the history and growth of his favorite science. In this investigation he will find that, although the fact of the *progressive growth* of science will be established, yet, the world's historic page will present to him many inequalities, and some very dark and dreary spots. He will find that the muses have often had to change their seats, and have always fled from turmoil and bloodshed to the retired shades and arcadian groves of their favorite votaries.

There is little doubt, but that the simple habits and diet of the earlier inhabitants of our earth,

"Their food the fruits, their drink the crystal rill,"

tended to endue them with robust and healthy frames, while their freedom from exciting passions, and all the tumult of more civilized and modern times, exempted them from many diseases which after generations were doomed to suffer. By degrees, however, for mutual protection at first, perhaps, to defend themselves from the prowling wolf or rapacious lion, they congregated together and submitted themselves to laws for the comfort and good of the whole. With the blessings of peace and personal security, they soon found however, commingled the seeds of disease and premature death. The former so increased in number, that the fable of Pandora's box became a fit emblem of their situation; hope alone remaining to cheer them amid their sorrows.

Surgery must needs now step in to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. And for so divine a blessing, it was fabled that the gods themselves interfered, and taught to man the healing art. Apollo is said to have communicated his skill in this science to his son *Æsculapius*, who then profited under the tuition of *Chiron* the Centaur; and for his great improvement and knowledge, of surgery in particular, he was deified and had temples dedicated to him in several parts of the world. Many countries contended for the honor of his birth, and, according to the learned, his name in the Phenician language, signifies a man of the knife, whence some writers conclude he was a native of Phenicia; but whether he was by birth a Phenician, Egyptian or Grecian, is of no great importance.

Regular practitioners in our art had not at that time been established, and any article of healing quality had its virtues handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, in the same manner that the ancient Jews preserved their political and religious laws.

After this time, particular remedies were recorded on pillars in public places. that all passers by might read and understand them. Still later, these prescrip tions were collected and deposited in the temples dedicated to the god of health Herodotus mentions the fact, that the sick were frequently brought into the streets, and by the road sides, where the passers by were expected to see them, and indicate to them any article or means, that their experience or that of others might suggest, to cure the disease.

By these means, a mass of information was in time collected by the priests of the temples which ultimately became of much service in forming a digest of rules and remedies in medicine. The discovery of the art of printing added further to the dissemination of the knowledge thus acquired, and was instrumental in preserving more permanently the collected wisdom of ages.

As early as the time of the Trojan war, according to the Iliad of Homer, we have an account of two sons of Æsculapius, Machaon and Podalirius, who were distinguished surgeons and chieftains in the Grecian army; and it is said that when the former was wounded by a dart, more sorrow was expressed for him than there was for any other chieftain. For in the language of the poet,

"A wise Physician skilled to heal,
Is more than armies to the public weal."

For 700 years after the Trojan war, the disciples and descendants of Æsculapius, called the Asclepiadæ were the only noted professors of the healing art. At the end of this period Hippocrates, who was also of this family, lived and flourished. His era is set down at about 500 years before Christ; and he is by universal consent, founded on his brilliant talents and great acquirements, termed the Father of Medicine. His sagacity was unrivalled; he excelled all his predecessors and contemporaries, reduced his science to order—compiled and laid down for posterity rules or aphorisms founded upon his own observation and confirmed by experience. He was the ablest surgeon as well as the best physician of his time.

The other Greek Physicians besides Hippocrates, whose writings have been preserved to our day, treating professedly of surgery are, Galen, Oribasius, Alexander Trallianus, Ætius and Paulus Ægineta. The works of these authors have been precious mines from which other laborers have extracted jewels which have been improved and polished from age to age up to the present time.—The successors of the Greeks were the Romans. Rome conquered Greece by her arms, but Greece returned the compliment by infusing her sciences, literature and refined tastes into the Roman people. Many distinguished physicians from the Grecian Islands practised medicine in Rome, not the least of whom was Galen.

Among the Romans themselves, the most distinguished author, and almost the only one whose writings are still extant, was Celsus. His work is a model for medical literature in any age. His chapters on *air*, *diet* and *fevers*, have never been excelled, and are well worthy the close perusal of the classical student.—His descriptions of many of the important operations in surgery, are the best among earlier writers.

The learning of Greece, with the works of its medical authors left it with its

liberties, and Athens, once the favored seat of the muses and of every thing like literature, science and liberty, yielded the palm to Alexandria, which city up to the middle of the 17th century contained the most renowned school in the world for Medicine, Anatomy and Surgery. Previous to this epoch, Alexandria was the Paris of the East, and contained the concentrated learning of the world. Surgery and dentistry were taught as distinct branches, much in the same manner as at the present day.

In the year 640 of the Christian era, the great library of Alexandria, containing about 700,000 volumes, belonging to Ptolomey Philadelphus, was burnt by the Saracens; and in the same century all Europe was overrun by barbarians called Goths and Vandals, so that every thing seemed to conspire to throw the human mind back into its primitive darkness and ignorance. Hence writers have termed these the dark ages—including a period from the 5th to about the 13th century.

Medicine with other branches of science was preserved from the general wreck by the Arabians, among whom the most eminent who treated of surgical subjects, were Rhases, Avicenna, Avenzoar, Averrhoes and Albucasis. Surgery did not, however, improve much in the hands of the Arabians who, from the natural timidity of their characters, were much averse to bloody and important operations—preferring rather to temporize and use minor and inefficient means, than to resort to the more sure and effectual modes by the knife.

They were also mere copyists of Galen, and his devoted followers, referring the solution of every difficulty to his works, rather than depend on their own observations for the explanation of the phenomena of disease.

In the 8th century medicine returned again to Italy—and the schools of Padua and Salernum became famous all over Europe; they contributed especially to the spread of surgical science over France, Germany and other neighboring countries. Lanfranc and Pitard are the most prominent names in the history of surgery in France in the 12th century. The former was educated in Salernum, the latter was a native of Paris. Persecuted in his own country, Lanfranc sought an asylum in France and went to Paris, where he formed the acquaintance and gained the friendship of Pitard. These distinguished men were long professors in the College of St. Como, which was founded by Louis IX, and added much to the celebrity of that institution during their life time, leaving surgery much improved at their death. From this time Paris and Montpelier became the chief seats of medical instruction, the former of which still stands first in many branches of Surgery and Anatomy, while the latter has lost, in the revolutions of the country, all its medical fame, except as a place for invalids and consumptive patients. A mere catalogue of the names of the surgeons who have adorned our science in France, would occupy more space than would be proper for our present purpose. Lanfranc, however, Pitard and Pitie, may be mentioned among the older ones—while Degenettes, Larrey, Dubois, Desault and Dupuytren among the most distinguished of the moderns. To Desault we are indebted for many improvements in the treatment of surgical diseases, and we are particularly indebted to him for a more simple and philosophical mode of bandaging, and of treating fractures and luxations in general.

Dupuytren, whose monument stands in the form of a noble pyramid, with the single name DUPUYTREN upon it, in Pere la Chaise—was, perhaps, the most dis-

tinguished of modern French Surgeons. With contemporaries like Cooper, Abernethy, and others in England, Roux, Desault and Bichat, in his own country, he must have possessed talents of the highest order to have attained the pre-eminence which he enjoyed. He is indeed termed the Napoleon of Surgery.

It may not perhaps be out of place here to give a short sketch of this great man's life and character. He was born of very humble parents, in the year 1772. At the early age of 12 years, he was induced by an officer of a regiment which was quartered in his native village, to go to Paris. Here he became acquainted with the late M. Alard; and the two young fellow-laborers commenced and prosecuted their studies with the most devoted zeal. They had but one paltry room between them; and this served for a sleeping as well as an eating apartment. All the furniture they had was a table, a couple of chairs and one bed; and their cupboard was often but very scantily provided, even with the necessaries of life.

It was in 1794, when he was only 17 years of age, that he first had an opportunity of giving proof of ability and an earnest of his future fame. At a public concourse he was appointed one of the "prosecteurs," or anatomical demonstrators at the school of medicine then recently established by government.—During the next five years, he labored most assiduously in the dissecting-room, and thus laid the foundation of that intimate knowledge of minute anatomy, which perhaps more than any other acquirement, served to render him, like Bailie, one of the greatest masters of diagnosis in disease. In 1801, he publicly contested with Dumeril for the place of "Chef des travaux anatomiques," but lost it by only one vote. Six months afterwards, however, he was elected in the place of Dumeril, who had been raised to a professorship. He now commenced lecturing upon anatomy, physiology and pathology.

In 1803 he was elected second surgeon to the Hotel Dieu, the largest hospital in Paris. In 1808 he was made adjunct to the chief surgeon, and three years afterwards, Sabatier, the senior surgeon, having died, Dupuytren was appointed the colleague of Pelletan. At the same time he succeeded to the chair of operative surgery in the school of medicine.

He was now a prominent man in the eyes of the public, occupying the two above mentioned important posts. Soon after his appointment as one of the chief surgeons to the Hotel Dieu, Pelletan withdrew, in consequence, it is said, of frequent quarrels with his junior colleague. This is not unlikely, as Dupuytren was naturally haughty and ambitious, and all who knew him were well aware that he never could endure a rival near his throne. While yet a boy, he was fond of repeating Cæsar's saying, "that he would rather be the first man in his own village, than the second in Rome;" and throughout his after life, the Napoleon of Surgery, (as Bouillaud calls him) seems to have always acted on this rather unamiable maxim.

Dupuytren (says his biographer) was unquestionably one of the most medical of surgeons. It was not the art alone—it was the *science* of surgery—which he explored so much more deeply than his contemporaries. Having his mind enriched with the most consummate knowledge of General and Descriptive Anatomy, and being intimately acquainted with the whole range of Physiology and Pathology, he took an enlarged view of every case, tracing it back to its source, discovering the cause which had produced it, the effects which the con-

stitution, temperament, or casual circumstances had occasioned, the changes which it had already produced, and the probable event of its progress and termination. Although one of the most accomplished operators of his time, he never sought for occasions to display his dexterity; it was a greater triumph to him to supersede the necessity of operation than even to have performed it well.

In the use of the knife, he was always cool and calm; bold and rapid where there was no uncertainty or possible chance of mistake, as in performing amputation of the limbs, and the excision of certain tumors; slow but steadily, sure in the more delicate operations of his art. The immense private practice which Dupuytren enjoyed increased the sphere of his observation. He was the "facele princeps" of his time. His reputation was not confined to his own country; it was European; patients from all parts of the continent came to Paris to consult him. He was honored with the confidence of two kings, elevated to the rank of Baron, decorated with various titles of distinction, and caressed by the most lofty and distinguished of his country."

The above brilliant picture, gentlemen, I present to you, not as a matter of mere curiosity or for the purpose of whiling away an idle hour, but for your decided and manly imitation. I do it for two reasons—the first, that it presents to you the dignity and honor which are sure to accompany success in our profession; and the second, which is perhaps the most weighty, in a country like ours, where every man is said to "*make* or *mar* his *fortune*," is the consideration that he rose to that dazzling height by his own unaided exertions. He was, in fact, a poor baker's son, without friends or fortune, and rose from the greatest obscurity and even pinching poverty, to be, not only the most distinguished, but the wealthiest surgeon of his age; for it is said that his fortune amounted, at his death, to two millions of dollars.

Of this immense sum he bequeathed about $50,000 for the purpose of establishing a museum and a Professorship on Pathological Anatomy. This museum is to Paris what the Hunterian museums are to London and Glasgow. Students from all parts of the world frequent them to study and admire these store-houses of medical knowledge. The museum of Dupuytren, is located nearly opposite the school of medicine, and is composed chiefly of wax and dried preparations representing diseased structures.

The museum of Hunter situated in Lincoln-Inn-Fields, in London, is more extensive, and consists, in a great part, of wet preparations, illustrating almost all branches of Physiology, and pathology. Surgery in England, though slower in its growth than on the continent of Europe, has, however, many illustrious names in its early, and especially in its more modern history.

Among the elder surgeons we find the names of Harvey, the distinguished discoverer of the circulation of the blood, who was a lecturer on anatomy and surgery.

Harvey was born in 1578, and, having completed his studies at Cambridge, went to Padua, in Italy, where he was admitted to the degree of Doctor, in unusually flattering terms of approbation, in the year 1602. In 1615 he was appointed by the College of Physicians to read lectures on anatomy and surgery, and it was in these lectures that he promulgated his great discovery.

It is not my design here, to enter into a minute account of this discovery, or detail the patient and untiring perseverance which led this devoted searcher after

truth to the final triumph which followed. The discovery itself, is one of the most important that has ever been made in our science, and has given rise to a view of the human organization, whether in a state of health or in that of disease, so far superior to anything known before, that the name of Harvey will no doubt be known and respected as long as medicine and surgery shall exist among men.

The beautiful, but now well-established fact, that the blood moves in a circle, of which the heart is the centre and chief-moving power, with the curious hydraulic arrangement of tubes, some of which, branching off in every direction, convey the glowing vital fluid to every part of the system, while others take it up again and return it in purple currents from each and every part of our bodies to the grand centre again, is finely expressed by the following lines by Dr. Darwin :—

"Thus from the heart the sanguine stream distils
O'er beauty's radiant shrine in vermil rills;
Feeds each fine nerve, each slender hair pervades :—
The skin's bright snow with living purple shades;
Each dimpling cheek with warmer blushes dyes,
Laughs on the lips and lightens in the eyes.
E'erwhile absorbed, the vagrant globules swim
From each fair feature and proportion'd limb,
Join'd in one trunk with deeper tint return
To the warm concave of the vital *urn*."

Cant. III. Part I. Bot. Guard.

Glision, Willis, Highmore, Mayow, Lower, Wiseman, Cheselden, and others, may be mentioned among the most distinguished of the older English surgeons. The names of the first *three* are permanently connected with different parts of anatomy and the last, viz. Cheselden, is well known for his numerous and important surgical operations—the most noted of which is that for congenital cataract.

From 1720 we date the commencement of the career of the distinguished family of *Munros*, in Edinburgh. A talent for the cultivation of medical science and for minute anatomical observation, seems to have descended, as an inheritance, from father to son in this family for several generations, so that it is customary to mention them numerically, as Munro primus, Munro secundus, &c. About the middle of this century, dates another important era in surgical science, the result of the genius and industry of the family of *Hunters*, one of whom, John, may be said himself to have reformed and improved the whole art and science of surgery. And his splendid collection, which has already been referred to, will remain for ages at once a monument to his name and a school in which future generations may read the progressive growth of medicine and surgery.

Hunter is the Dupuytren of English surgery, and, like him, may be cited as an example of self-made genius; without the education or intellectual refinement of Dupuytren, he has perhaps done more to establish and elucidate the great principles of Inflammation and Pathology, in general, than Dupuytren, and has left a more enduring monument in his numerous works and noble museum.

Since his time, Sir Everard Horne, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Burns, and the Bells, have been leading ornaments in English Surgery. One of the latter, the present Sir Charles Bell, stands unrivalled for his discoveries and philosophical views of

the nervous system. Among those who still live, are, Sir A. Cooper, Sir B. Brodie, Mr. B. Cross, Mr. Liston, Howship, and Laurence. The first, Sir A. Cooper, has been termed the prince of living surgeons. Having attained great wealth and the pinacle of his profession, he has once or twice essayed to retire and spend his days in ease and tranquility, but a still vigorous mind, with the unceasing demands of the afflicted from all parts of the world, keep him yet in the ranks of active surgeons. His mantle, however, will soon fall upon Sir B. Brodie, who is the next star in the constellation of living British surgeons.

But it is time that I turn to a field nearer home, for you may now perhaps be ready to ask, what has America done for the advancement of science and surgery? This is, of course, delicate ground to tread upon, and the youthfulness of our country and institutions might induce us to pass over them as not yet sufficiently matured to have obtained a place in the history of medicine. But though the page of our country's history may be said to be still moist, yet, when we can point to the names of Rush, of Hossack, of Smith, of Physic, and Mott, we cannot but feel that, though young in years, we have exhibited a development of talent that Europe herself might be proud of. The name of Rush is indeed well known in the medical annals of Europe. In his life-time he was honored by her sovereigns with medals and other tokens expressive of their sense of the splendor of his talents and the improvements he had achieved. His name among the signers of our declaration of independence, will also remain as evidence of the confidence that his country had in his patriotism and principles. When Rush passed from the busy stage of existence, he left a young man whom a few years proved to be not unworthy of the high confidence which he always placed in him. One whose life will form an important era in our science, as long as surgery shall name a votary at her shrine on the continent of the new world.

Dr. Physic, whose ashes are scarce cold in the dreary tomb where he is laid, was, by nature, fortune, and circumstances, destined to become the father of American surgery.

Blessed with indulgent and intelligent parents, whose circumstances were those of easy competence, and whose sole delight seemed to centre in the improvement and best interests of this their only son, with a mental constitution of the purest and most elevated kind, a love of truth which would compare with the same trait in the character of the immortal Washington, and a devotedness to study that was unremitting, he gradually but surely attained an eminence which, while it placed him on a level with the proudest of Europe's favored Sons, gave to the Republic of America a name which she will hand down with pride and pleasure to the remotest generations.

Philip Syng Physic, was born in Philadelphia on the 7th of July, 1768. His father's name was Edmund Physic. His mother was a most estimable and pious woman, who was blessed with a strong intellect and evinced, through life, great judgment and decision of character. The Doctor never ceased to feel and express the greatest filial love and reverence for these honored parents, and has frequently been known to declare, that he was convinced that whatever was most useful and excellent in his character, was attributable to the early lessons and impressions which he imbibed from them.

At the early age of 11 years he was placed in the academy belonging to the

society of Friends in South Fourth street, under the tuition of Robert Proud, where he remained until he entered the Collegiate department of the University of Pennsylvania. Having passed through the usual course of studies prescribed in that institution, he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in May 1785.

About this time, an incident is said to have occurred which decided the future course of his life. His father, whilst handling a knife, had the misfortune to cut one of his fingers, and the wound proved to be so severe that he was obliged to procure the services of a medical friend. Upon one occasion his son begged to be permitted to apply the necessary dressings and bandage to the finger. His father consented, and was so much surprised at the great skill and dexterity which his son displayed in making the applications that he determined, in his own mind, to make him a surgeon.

Accordingly, in 1785, one month after he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he was placed under the superintendence of the late Dr. Khna, well known as the pupil of Linnæus, and a most distinguished and successful practitioner, and then Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania.

After three years' study and attendance on medical Lectures, young Physic, accompanied by his father, embarked for Great Britain, where, in the large hospitals of London and Edinburgh, with the additional honor and advantage of being a pupil to the great John Hunter, he obtained, by close study and exemplary conduct, a distinguished name and a thorough knowledge of his profession.

So pleased was the great English surgeon with the studious and correct deportment of the young American, that he became his warmest friend and most efficient patron, openly acknowledging him as his favorite pupil, and conferring upon him the most unreserved confidence, with the full benefit of his advice and experience. Dr. Physic, (says his biographer and son-in-law, Dr. Randolph) returned to his native country in September 1792, and commenced the practice of his profession in Philadelphia. That Dr. Physic entered upon his practical career under the most favorable circumstances will, I think, be readily admitted. I have already shown that, in addition to his own extraordinary qualifications, he had enjoyed the most ample opportunities of acquiring knowledge from sources distinguished alike for their exalted character and superior excellence. Nature also, rendered her best aid for fitting him pre-eminently by all external advantages, for the successful accomplishment of his objects. His personal appearance was commanding in the extreme. He was of a medium height, his countenance noble and expressive; he had a large Roman nose; his mouth was beautifully formed, the lips somewhat thin, and he had a high forehead, and a fine, hazel eye, which was keen and penetrating. The expression of his countenance was grave and dignified, yet often inclined to melancholy, more particularly when he was engaged in deep thought, or in performing an important and critical operation. Dr. Physic rarely indulged in excessive mirth; he was, however, far from being insensible to playful humor, and on such occasions his countenance would be lighted up by a benign smile, which altered entirely the whole expression of his features. His manners and address were exceedingly dignified, yet polished and affable; and when he was engaged in attendance upon a critical case, or in a surgical operation, there was a degree of tenderness, and at the same time a confidence in his manner, which could not fail to soothe the feelings and allay the fears of the most timid and sensitive.

Our time will not permit us to follow him through the long course of professional labors, triumphs and honors which for more than forty years attended his footsteps. Suffice it to say, that during more than 20 years of that time he stood confessedly at the pinnacle of his profession, was courted by the learned and great—respected and caressed by all; and on the 15th of December 1837, paid that debt which is common to humanity—when he,

"Gave his honors to the world again,
The blessed part to heaven, and slept in peace."

In conclusion, gentlemen, Professors, Trustees, and Students of the Vermont Academy of Medicine, may I not ask your indulgence and support, nay even sympathy, while I attempt, however feebly, to portray those principles which have engaged the attention of genius of so high an order. And may I not, in view of what has already been done and of the brilliant prospect before us, ask your attention to one of the most potent means of alleviating human ills and miseries? May I not request you to enter with me this beauteous temple, whose wall sand superstructure bear the impress of age, and whose various departments have been adorned and embellished by the noblest intellects that have visited our sublunary world.

That the Castleton Medical Institution may continue to go on in the march of improvement which so eminently distinguishes the present age, (not only with regard to our own, but to sister sciences,) and that for ages she may, like the springs which gush from your own breezy mountains, send forth pure streams which shall encompass the length and breadth of the land, fructifying, vivifying and blooming, is the earnest wish and desire of one who has cast his lot among you, and whose sole aim shall be the accomplishment of those high and useful purposes.